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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3052
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SF](#)

SUBJECT: (S/NF) SACP'S NZIMANDE BELIEVES USG FUNDED MBEKI
CAMPAIGN

REF: A. PRETORIA 3939

[1](#)B. PRETORIA 1598

Classified By: Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Perry Ball. Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (S/NF) Blade Nzimande, General Secretary of the South African Communist Party (SACP) and ally of newly-elected African National Congress (ANC) President Jacob Zuma, told Zimbabwean opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai o/a December 27 that the United States provided funds for President Thabo Mbeki's failed ANC election campaign, according to close Embassy contact and Zimbabwe businessman Strive Masiyiwa (strictly protect). In a December 29 phone call to PolOff, Masiyiwa said that Tsvangirai had briefed him on his meeting with Nzimande. Nzimande reported to Tsvangirai that incumbent ANC President Mbeki had tried to "buy votes" before and during that ANC National Congress (ref A), and that the funds came from the U.S. Government. According to Masiyiwa, Tsvangirai said that Nzimande made the allegation "with a lot

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of conviction."

[1](#)2. (S/NF) Nzimande reportedly claimed that the United States did not want Zuma to become President, and therefore supported Mbeki's reelection campaign. Masiyiwa said he did not believe Nzimande's charge -- and told Tsvangirai so -- but wanted the USG to be aware of the allegation. The belief that the USG supported and funded Mbeki creates a "very hostile platform" for engaging the Zuma camp, Masiyiwa noted.

[1](#)3. (S/NF) Turning to the current ANC political tensions, Nzimande told Tsvangirai that the Zuma camp is increasingly angry with Mbeki and will challenge him at the upcoming January 7 ANC National Executive Council (NEC) meeting. (NOTE: Nzimande made these comments before Zuma was charged with corruption (septel), a step that only exacerbated tensions within the ANC. END NOTE.) According to Nzimande, Zuma attempted to "mend fences" with his conciliatory closing address at the ANC National Congress. Instead of reciprocating, Mbeki has "gone on the offensive." Nzimande cited as an example Mbeki's December 21 approval of the new, "pro-Mbeki" board for the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) despite strong opposition from the Zuma camp, as well as Mbeki's public comments that the President of the ANC will not necessarily be the party's candidate for the national presidency. According to Nzimande, at the January 7 meeting, Zuma supporters will give Mbeki three choices: (1) "toe the party line" and implement ANC policy; (2) resign; or (3) "you will be recalled." "The battle lines

are drawn," Masiyiwa observed, with both sides "digging in for a fight."

¶4. (S/NF) COMMENT: Nzimande's charge that the USG funded the Mbeki campaign, while ridiculous, is evidence of the intense suspicion of the United States harbored by the left wing of the ANC and its tripartite alliance partners. This follows earlier rumors among Zuma supporters of a USG plot to kill Zuma (ref B). On the growing political tensions in the ANC, we agree that the January 7 NEC meeting is an important event and will help set the tone for the year ahead. ANC elders will likely try to calm tensions and forge an agreement on coordination between Luthuli House (ANC headquarters) and the Union Building (seat of government). END COMMENT.
BOST